

# INSPIRE GIRLS TO BE FEARLESS SEDUCATE GIRLS TO BE LEADERS

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AN OVERVIEW OF
THE BISHOP
STRACHAN SCHOOL

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Grounded in a 150-year tradition of excellence, our students embrace change and seek new ways of thinking, knowing and doing. They move steadily toward their goals – understanding that taking risks also means accepting failure as an important part of growth. They grow in confidence and competence as they feel support and opportunities around them every day. We believe it's important that girls know they can do and be anything, including themselves.



In guiding the highest standards of academic excellence and vital student character development at The Bishop Strachan School (BSS), we leverage the *Signature of a BSS Girl* to inspire our girls to be fearless and educate them to be leaders, which is precisely our mission. To have the confidence and courage to make a difference in the world, girls first need to be comfortable with themselves and their ideas. That's our primary focus at BSS: when they are curious, know themselves, persist through difficulty, trust their own voice and find ways to reach their goals, girls carry within themselves everything they need to go anywhere – and do anything – in the world.

BSS is passionate about girls' education. When you meet us, you'll hear it in our voices. We hope you will come by for a visit and see what we're all about. In the meantime, this viewbook is a great way to start the conversation. You'll discover our *Culture of Powerful Learning*, extensive co-curriculars, our innovative approach to technology, comprehensive student supports, inspiring campus resources and so much more. Best of all, you'll get a feel for the energy and enthusiasm that courses through these halls every day.

Welcome to BSS!

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Judith Carlisle

Head of School

# **OUR MISSION**

Inspire girls to be fearless. Educate girls to be leaders.

# **OUR VISION**

BSS will be an inspirational force for women to reach their full potential as transformative leaders.

# **OUR VALUES**

### **PURSUE EXCELLENCE**

Strive to be the best in all that we do.

### **TAKE RISKS**

Be willing to take risks, challenge convention and support a nurturing environment where it's safe to fail.

### **BE CREATIVE**

Look at a challenge from all angles and fearlessly explore.

# **LEARN FROM OUR DIFFERENCES**

Celebrate the unique voice in all individuals to expand our worldview.

# **HONOUR OUR HERITAGE**

Honour the past, live in the present, own the future.

### **EMBRACE CHANGE**

Embrace change and uncertainty in order to grow.

# **BE CURIOUS**

Live with a thirst for learning.

# **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

BSS is committed to continuing to foster a respectful, diverse and inclusive community. Fulfilling our Vision demands that our community understands and engages with the world we live in. We believe embracing and respecting differences honours our Anglican roots. For our students, the value to their intellectual and ethical development of learning amid diverse perspectives is to strengthen their confidence in their own voices while respecting the voices of others. Diverse perspectives enrich our learning environment and affirm our commitment to excellence. Our students' futures will depend on their ability to work and live among the world's citizens in an increasingly connected global community.



# **GROWTH MINDSET | ETHICAL CITIZENSHIP**

CUR?OSITY SELF-AWARENESS GR!T VIOICE LE^DERSHIP

# SICHATURE OF A BESSORES BESSORES

The personal attributes of the *Signature of a BSS Girl* are fostered throughout the BSS learning experience so students can navigate the challenges of today's complex world, and help others do the same.

**LEARN MORE AT BSS.ON.CA/SIGNATURE** 



# CULTURE OF POWERFUL LEARNING

We believe strongly in the power of girls and their ability to change the world for the better. That's why we specialize in their learning needs, focusing on intellectual, social, emotional, physical, spiritual and ethical growth in a nurturing environment. We call this approach the *Culture of Powerful Learning* because within it, BSS girls find their voice, their drive and themselves.



### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Authentic, meaningful work – real-world problems and projects relevant to the student

Innovation – exploring new ways of teaching, learning, partnering and doing

Engagement – connecting to student interest, curiosity and motivation to learn

Transparency – assessment, learning outcomes and evidence of learning shared by all

Excellence – the highest attainable learning standards for each age and stage of growth

Relationship – emotionally supportive and positive relationships with and between students

# **PEDAGOGY (HOW)**

Our commitment to academic excellence is seen in our research-based pedagogy and our professional learning community. Inquiry lies at the heart of our teaching and learning from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12, interwoven with other effective approaches such as:

- Reggio-inspired learning
- Knowledge building and creation
- Project and problem-based learning
- Discussion-based learning (Harkness/Socratic)
- Experiential education
- Direct instruction

# **CURRICULUM (WHAT)**

Our framework both aligns with and surpasses the Ontario Curriculum. Extending their learning beyond a rigorous academic program, our students are motivated to deepen their interests and take risks through:

- Academic Enrichment, Arts, Athletics, Leadership, Outdoor and Experiential Education, Service Learning and Spirituality
- Interdisciplinary connections
- Multiplicity of contemporary global perspectives
- Environmental understanding and action

# **JUNIOR SCHOOL JK TO GRADE 6**

Our Junior School's inquiry-based learning offers ample opportunities for students to ask questions and pursue the lines of thought that emerge. Our approach combines math, literacy, science, the arts and other disciplines to allow our students to explore the many dimensions of each topic in a deeply engaged way. Teachers are partners and guides on the inquiry journey, supporting learning at every stage.

But can our youngest students participate in rich inquiry? Absolutely! Starting in Junior Kindergarten, their learning is organized around Big Ideas like "culture," "community" and "ethical citizenship." Students build meaning and make connections that surprise even us sometimes.

Our balanced approach to academic excellence – including an early introduction to science, technology, engineering arts and math (STEAM) subjects – ensures that our students are well prepared for the higher grades. But even more important, they develop into confident and creative thinkers within an environment that equally values their social, emotional, physical, ethical and spiritual growth.

Our Junior School is a place of exploration and discovery – with an awful lot of friendship and fun thrown in.







# **MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES 7 AND 8**

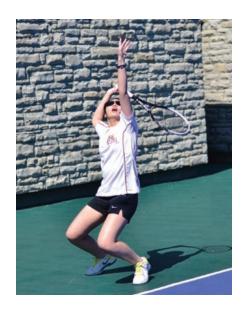
Middle School is a distinctive time of growth and change. With one foot in childhood and the other in adolescence, students are navigating a complicated social and emotional landscape. And their individual interests are emerging: some girls are passionate about the environment, others focus on human rights. Our role is to draw out that abundance of possibility.

Our girls enjoy relevant, real-life learning experiences that tap into their rapidly-evolving understanding of self, society and global issues. In our sustainable cities unit, for example, they tackle problems of resource allocation, social justice and international development – and then present solutions to city planners. Talk about making a difference!

In everything they do, Middle School students are seeking significance and connection – with each other, their teachers and their learning. Focusing on personal identity and healthy relationships as much as coursework and projects, our teachers and counsellors support each girl as she finds her voice and reaches her potential.

In our Middle School, every girl is encouraged and included. With that strong sense of belonging, her learning takes off.





# **SENIOR SCHOOL GRADES 9 TO 12**

Our inquiry-based approach at BSS culminates in the Senior School, where students deepen their skills in project and problem-based learning connected to the big questions that excite them. Tackling real-life issues like youth mental health or toxic levels of lead in toys, our students jump at the chance to make an impact in the world.

An integral part of our *Culture of Powerful Learning*, our academic program exceeds the Ontario curriculum and offers more than 100 credit courses. Advanced Placement credits present a greater academic challenge that universities will notice during the admissions process.

Students also have the option of earning the AP Capstone Diploma, which provides highly-valued research and seminar skills.

Our students are well prepared for success at the best universities around the world. But even more important, they are equipped to meet the challenges of life. They have the independence and self-advocacy skills needed to take on the world, while belonging to a global network of remarkable alumnae.

With an extraordinary array of leading edge resources at their disposal, students leave BSS with confidence, competence and compassion – ready to do or be anything!



# **INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY**

We've created an unabashedly technology-rich environment for our students and staff, incorporating the latest thinking, tools and partnerships to ignite creativity and invent with purpose.





### **DESIGN TECHNOLOGY LABS**

Our students love to throw out ideas in class – and also launch projectiles from their own catapults to analyze their motion and efficiency. That's just one of many exciting projects students take from start to finish in our three state-of-the-art Design Technology labs. Other student ventures include water filtration systems, wind turbines and interactive games that teach physics.

With access to a 3D printer, laser cutter, robotics equipment, microcontrollers and hand tools, students in all grades have everything they need to bring their ideas to life. Every day, hands-on projects are underway in classrooms, labs, clubs and independent projects, growing the design thinking and entrepreneurial mindset that are of such value in our rapidly-changing world.

### **APPLE DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL**

BSS has once again been proudly named an Apple Distinguished School. What does that mean? That we are a centre of leadership and educational excellence when it comes to learning with technology – and one of the most innovative schools in the world.

What did we do to deserve such recognition? We joined our inquiry-based approach to learning with inventive uses of technology that help our students find answers to big questions. Working with our Technology and Innovation team, teachers look for ways to infuse design thinking and creative problem-solving into everyday learning. And industry experts think we're pretty good at it.

# Distinguished School

# **BALANCED USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

All technology all the time? Not at BSS. Our use of technology is age appropriate, and we know the value of turning it off regularly and engaging in the most basic and profound of human interactions: live conversations. There's a reason why newborn babies are drawn to faces over abstract shapes - their survival and growth depends on establishing close and meaningful connections with others. That's why relationships come first at BSS and we educate our students about brain development, online hazards, the value of screen-free time, the role of sleep in learning, and the best healthy habits for life.









### **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

Albert Einstein said that creativity is intelligence having fun, and we couldn't agree more – or offer more creative options. Music, visual and media art, theatre, dance – it's all here, from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12. Some students want to be in the play; others prefer to work behind the scenes or design the marketing campaign. Yet others express themselves by playing in the band, singing in the choir or joining a dance group. Our girls uncover their talents, find their creative voice and speak an ancient language through the arts.

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP

To prepare herself to make a difference in the world, each student has to understand who she is, what she stands for and how she can have an impact. So we give her plenty of opportunities to find out. Our students lead clubs, captain teams, join councils, hold elected positions, head music ensembles, organize events, become ambassadors of the school....There are endless ways to flex their leadership muscles.

To gain something you've never had, you've got to do something you've never done. Our girls understand that leaders move beyond the known and familiar. That's one way they learn to be fearless.

### **CLUBS**

There are only so many hours in the day, so it can be hard for our students to choose where to spend their time. Prepare for a spelling bee or sharpen an eye for photography? Develop business skills or engage in diplomatic relations? Build a better robot or become a mathlete? Engage in public speaking or public service? We have a club for all of that and much more.

Wherever our girls find themselves, they truly do find themselves – by gaining practical experience, working on diverse teams and following their hearts. With lots of laughs, whoops and high fives along the way.

FOR MORE DETAILS ON ALL OUR CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM, VISIT BSS.ON.CA/BEYONDTHECLASSROOM

# **BACK TO NATURE**

Why do our students go outside to learn – on our own grounds, in the extensive ravine system next door, or in natural spaces further afield? Because as poet Rainer Maria Rilke puts it, "If we surrendered to earth's intelligence, we could rise up rooted, like trees."

Nature is a great teacher, and our students grow stronger and more resilient from its lessons. From learning how to build shelters and cross streams to studying biodiversity and natural resource management, BSS girls interact with the environment in their quest to know more, take action and solve problems.

Our Outdoor and Environmental Education program runs through the entire school. Our youngest students learn about natural cycles and conservation. Our older girls enjoy overnight trips packed with ecological learning and activities like canoeing and fire building. Overall, the OEE program extends our curriculum outdoors while our students develop leadership skills that support them for life.







# **INTO THE WORLD**

Behind every great woman changing the world is a young girl discovering her love of it.

# LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Where will she find her passion? Her local and international experiences might include volunteering here at home and advocating, exploring the music and culture of Cuba with the Senior Band, studying abroad in Spain or France, or taking off for the Ecuadorian Amazon to partner with local communities.

Bridging social and cultural divides exposes our students to multiple perspectives. Each girl also gains invaluable insight into who she is and where she can go from here.

# SERVICE LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP

It's no surprise to us that providing service to others boosts mental and physical health. We see the transformation firsthand in our girls as they find meaning and purpose in something larger than themselves. Supporting others through outreach projects, community partnerships or civic engagement shows our girls how they can make a difference locally and globally.

Experience is a fantastic teacher. Our girls learn to lead by immersing themselves in the complexities of the real world and meeting its challenges.





### **WELLNESS CENTRE**

With registered nurses on site, the BSS Wellness Centre develops and delivers health and wellness initiatives. The Centre provides a team approach to physical and mental health and collaborates with students and families to support healthy practices at all stages of life.

### STUDENT SERVICES

Our Student Services team is there to help with just about anything, from being a new student to course planning to facing personal challenges or preparing for university. Experienced counsellors help students to assess their own abilities, develop a plan for success and make good decisions about university and career options.

### **LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE**

The Learning Resource Centre provides a learning environment to help students achieve their academic aspirations. It is a quiet space in the school that specializes in learning strategies, time management and organization.

### **TEACHER ADVISORY GROUPS**

Students in Grades 9 to 12 belong to a Teacher Advisory Group (TAG) which meets regularly to discuss any aspect of school life. In this way, each girl establishes a special bond with an advisor who shares her BSS journey, offering encouragement and guidance along the way.



# **STANDING BEHIND HER**

BSS students are a remarkably varied lot, so we offer guidance and counsel in many forms. Whatever direction their thoughts or questions take, our girls have someone to talk to about life's mysteries and possibilities.

# **SPIRITUAL LEARNING**

Our Chaplain works with students within the framework of the student's belief system to ensure their spiritual growth and development.

# **PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING**

Our girls love to ask our school psychologist all kinds of questions – about learning, mental health, friendship, stress or anything else on their minds. In a time of life marked by tremendous change and growth, it's comforting – and sometimes vital – to have an experienced psychologist on hand whose emphasis on mental health and wellness helps students steer the ship of adolescence.



# IT'S A GIRL'S WORLD

Everything our campus offers belongs to our girls. Here, they learn, lead and grow on seven-and-a-half beautiful acres of historical architecture, modern design, specialized labs and studios, flexible learning spaces, and outdoor play areas.

### **ALL TOGETHER NOW**

Our main building was completed in 1915 and houses Boarding, some Senior School classes, our Middle School, administrative offices and Chapel, where students lead talks and take time to connect. Our stunning 12-year-old Junior School is airy and bright and encourages creativity and collaboration among students and teachers. Throughout the campus, students enjoy dedicated places purpose-built for their activities as well as open, adaptable spaces that they can shape to suit their learning.

All this comes together to create one unique and inspiring campus.

# **SPACE MATTERS**

Why do our living and learning spaces matter so much? Because our minds are social by nature and develop in relation to our environment. Researchers study the ways in which physical surroundings affect student achievement — everything from colour palette to natural light, air quality and spaces that range from the intimate to the majestic. An innovative and active learning environment elevates student thinking and improves learning outcomes.

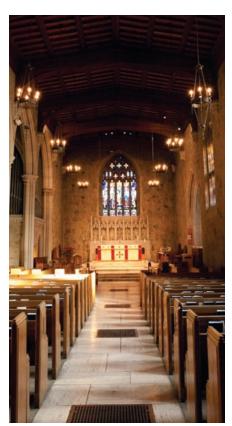
# AT THE INTERSECTION

Our new wing is designed to support our inquiry-based approach to learning. Offering 64,000-square feet of flexible and functional space, the buillding includes STEAM labs, a black box theatre, additional gym, and art and music studios among its many offerings. This expansion of our campus opens new possibilities for collaborative learning, independent inquiry and interdisciplinary study. It also ensures that our students explore the ways in which science, technology, engineering and math intersect with the arts.











# **HOME IS A FEELING**

Our boarders from Grades 7 through 12 transform as they grow and learn, but their home at BSS remains steady and constant: warm, friendly, safe and comfortable. Here, 75 girls from about 15 countries live in an extraordinarily diverse environment and make lifelong friends across nations, cultures and traditions. There may be no better preparation for life in a globalized world. But what our boarders appreciate more than anything is a strong sense of family right at school.





### **HOME AWAY HOME**

What kind of girl becomes a boarder? In our experience, every kind! Some are seasoned world explorers, others are new to travel. Some are openly bold and daring, others are more quietly determined to take the reins of life. The variety of personality and interests evident throughout all of BSS is also seen in boarding. And every girl enjoys the same world-class academic program, co-curricular activities, and student support services – not to mention all that Canada's most multicultural city has to offer.

Girls from Grade 7 to 12 make Toronto their temporary home while living at BSS, arriving to our campus from all over the world, including Canada, China, the Caribbean, Ethiopia, Mexico, Kazakstan, Russia, USA and Vietnam.

### THE BOARDING PROGRAM

Student care and well-being is at the heart of our program. Our dedicated Boarding staff provides a high level of academic and social support so each girl can achieve her best in her studies, activities, relationships and personal growth. Boarders receive academic support from the school's Learning Resource Centre, and regular evening study is supervised by expert teachers. They also have access to counsellors, our school psychologist and our Chaplain for additional care and guidance.

It's hard to say which perks of Boarding our students enjoy the most. It might be having full reign of the school's amazing athletic facilities, including a pool, tennis courts and fitness centre. Or it could be the healthy meals and international cuisine created by our food services staff, who accommodate dietary needs while providing familiar comfort foods. Or perhaps it's the fun weekend activities in the city that broaden perspectives and deepen the bonds of friendship. Each girl has her own reasons to love boarding — but all thrive in our unique program and caring community.



# **COMMUNITY OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNERS**

It only makes sense to us that our faculty and staff take their learning seriously. BSS is an engaged and vibrant place where each member of the community – from the students to the teachers to the administration – engages in inquiry-based learning with lots of debate and discussion. Everyone who works here sets learning goals for the year and participates in our professional learning days. Just as our students build their knowledge and skills on teams, question their assumptions and refine their practices, so do we. This way, new ideas are shared and tested in our learning groups and in our classrooms.

Gone are the days when teachers and staff worked in isolation and at a distance from each other. Our commitment to professional learning requires a high degree of collaboration as we realize our common cause to offer the best in girls' education. Plenty of research links higher levels of student achievement to educators who work in a collaborative culture of professional learning. And that, in a nutshell, explains why we do it: our students achieve more.

# **CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY**

# A TRADITION OF ENGAGEMENT

As volunteers in the classroom and at events, our families are incredibly generous with their time. They believe equally in the power of education and the strength of community. Every BSS parent belongs to the Parent Association and is invited to participate however they can. On any given day, you'll see parents staffing our general store, engaged in fundraising, serving as ambassadors or just proudly applauding their young performers, musicians and athletes.

Our Board of Governors and Board of Trustees are also populated by exceptional leaders of diverse skills and backgrounds. They work together and with the Senior Leadership Team to provide strategic direction and ensure the financial health of the school. Of course, alumnae serve on our Boards as well – just one of so many ways they never really leave BSS! They also join the BSS Alumnae Association and come back as speakers, mentors, advisors and role models for our current students.

# **GIVING FROM THE HEART**

Did you know that BSS is a registered charity? Tuition fees cover our day-to-day expenses and operations, while fundraising ensures that we can continually enhance our campus, expose our faculty to the latest innovations in education, bring expert speakers into the school, and open our doors to more girls of exceptional promise. The philanthropic spirit of the BSS community helps make us a global leader in progressive education for girls.

# SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

We believe that an outstanding education should be accessible to all. That's why, starting in Grade 7, we offer scholarships and tuition assistance to as many qualified applicants as possible. The deeper our financial assistance pool, the more girls of talent and ability we can welcome to our community. Some of our donors feel particularly passionate about helping to make a BSS education more accessible to girls who are eager to experience it.



"I'm just so blessed to have been given this opportunity," says Financial Assistance recipient Shalom Chen, Class of 2017

"So many families supported the school before we arrived. Our girls really benefited from the beautiful and well designed space built by others. We want to carry on that tradition and contribute to the physical infrastructure of BSS."

Richard and Jennifer Bradlow, who donated in support of the new wing to commemorate the connection their daughters Ryann, Class of 2019, and Jaden, Class of 2021, (right) feel to BSS.



# **UNIVERSITY BOUND**

Once our girls enter the Senior School, they begin work with their teachers and counsellors to identify their deepest interests and prepare for the university application process. One hundred per cent of BSS graduates are accepted to top-tier schools around the world, such as Boston University, Columbia, Cornell, McGill, Northwestern, NYU, Oxford, Parsons School of Design, Princeton, Queen's and University of Toronto. From there, the possibilities are endless!

### **CANADIAN OFFERS**

Acadia University
Bishop's University
Brock University
Carleton University
Concordia University
Dalhousie University
LaSalle College
McGill University
McMaster University

OCAD University

Queen's University

Quest University

Ryerson University

St. Francis Xavier University

Trent University
University of Alberta

University of British Columbia

University of Guelph

University of Guelph-Humber University of King's College, Halifax University of Ontario Institute of

Technology

University of Ottawa

University of Prince Edward Island

University of Saskatchewan University of Toronto University of Victoria University of Waterloo University of Windsor

University of Windsor Western University

Wilfrid Laurier University

York University

### **U.K. & INTERNATIONAL OFFERS**

Birkbeck, University of London
City, University of London
Durham University
Oxford Brookes University
Queen Mary University of London
St. George's, University of London
University of Bristol
University of Central Lancashire
University of East London
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Leeds
University of Manchester
University of Melbourne
University of St Andrews

### **U.S. OFFERS**

**Boston University** 

University of Westminster

Brandeis University
Colgate University
College for Creative Studies,
Wayne State University
College of William and Mary
Cornell University
Drexel University
Duke University
George Washington University
Harvard University
Hawaii Pacific University
Johns Hopkins University
Middlebury College

Northeastern University Parsons School of Design, The New School Pepperdine University Pratt Institute Princeton University Savannah College of Art and Design School of the Art Institute of Chicago St. Lawrence University Stanford University Syracuse University Tufts University University of California, Davis University of California, Merced University of California, Irvine University of California, Los Angeles University of California, Santa Barbara University of California, Santa Cruz University of Cincinnati University of Pennsylvania University of Rochester University of Southern California

University of Vermont

Wake Forest University

Wesleyan College



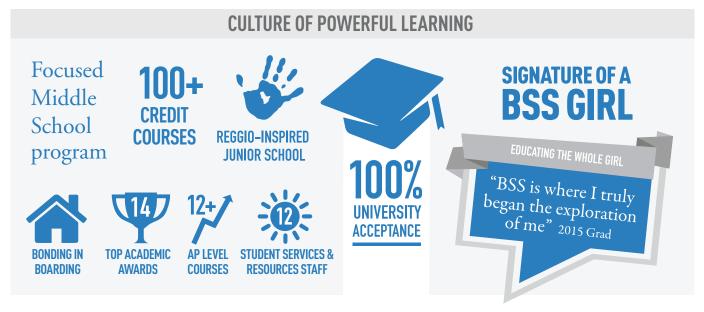
# **BSS BY THE NUMBERS**

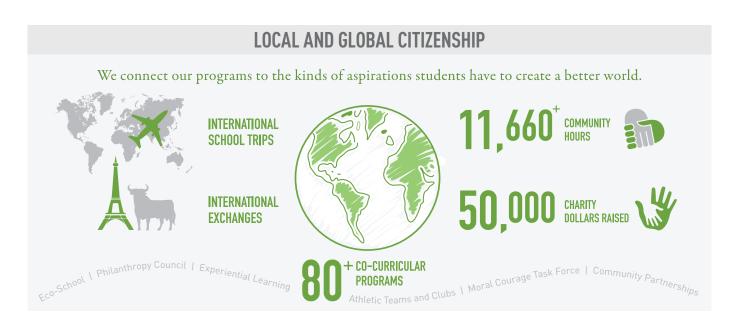
BSS has had a lot of years to become experts in how girls learn. And, along the way, we've built a strong and supportive community, collectively aiming for the highest of standards. Here are a few facts and figures about Canada's oldest independent day and boarding school for girls.

Our students are priority #1
900 students in JK to Grade 12
75 girls live on campus in Boarding
200 staff and faculty
8,500 alumnae around the world

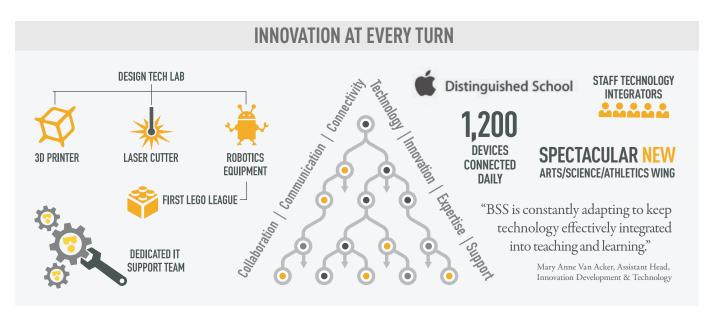
3 schools under one roof
Beautiful campus on 7 acres
Main building opened in 1915
Junior School opened in 2004
Arts/science/athletic wing opened in 2017











# **CONNECT WITH US.**

WE'RE HERE TO HELP.

studentrecruiting@bss.on.ca 416-483-4325, ext. 1220 bss.on.ca/apply



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